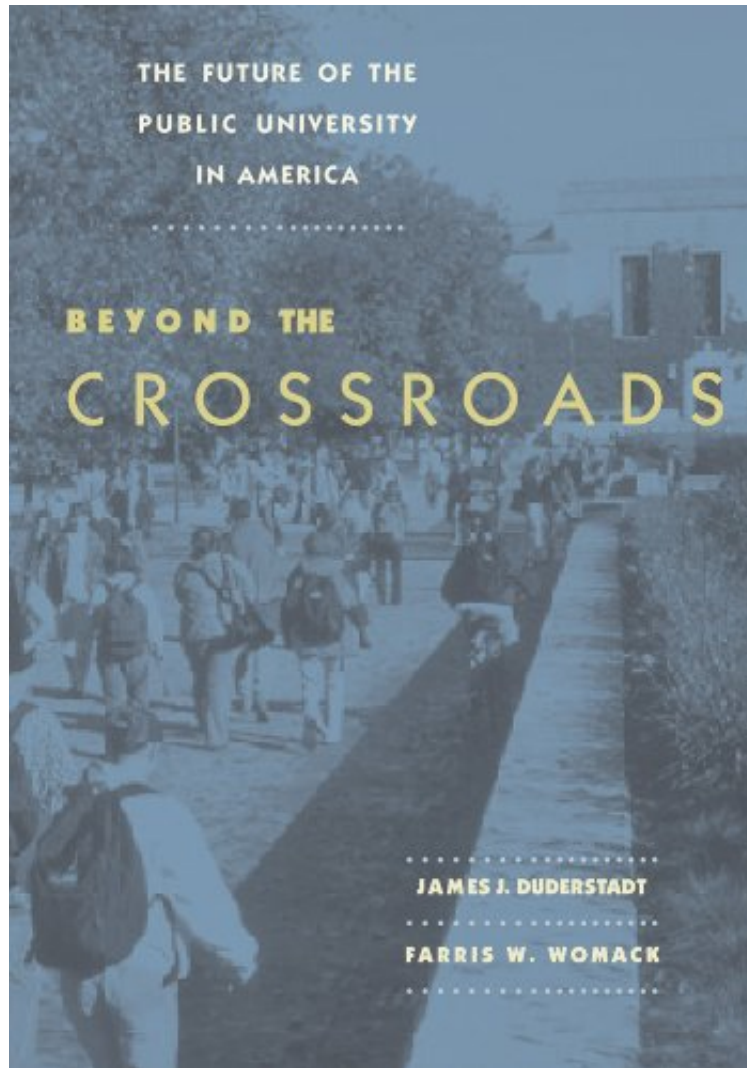


# The Future of the Public University in America: Beyond the Crossroads

*James J. Duderstadt, Farris W. Womack*  
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**James J. Duderstadt, Farris W. Womack : The Future of the Public University in America: Beyond the Crossroads** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Future of the Public University in America: Beyond the Crossroads:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. visionaryBy R SmithImagine a world where governing boards and trustees put institutional interests over their own; where presidents and administrators spent less time protecting the college from the petty politics and cronyism inherent in today's boards; where accreditation agencies advocated for innovation and change, as opposed to forcing colleges to stick to old structures and practices; where those same

agencies actually gave the public information they could use, as opposed to hiding it. Imagine a world where faculty acknowledge the real value of tenure (academic freedom) and not view it as a shield from accountability; where colleges are not administered like horizontal plantations, but rather by flattened structures where everyone is committed to the institution's mission and input is actually used, not just listened to. Imagine a college where the focus is on authentic forms of learning, not the usual lecture-test-repeat teaching style found on most campuses; where outdated programs are eliminated to make room for innovation. This is the higher education world Duderstadt advocates in this book. Change, however, will be an uphill battle. As an example, accreditation agencies are too committed to a system of rewarding mediocrity - virtually any college can be accredited by doing the bare minimum and the substantive results of reviews are NEVER shared with the public. Additionally, the markers of quality they use are based on outdated organizational models (which shouldn't be surprising; the people running these agencies are ancient). Deep rooted systems that stifle innovation will be difficult to change, but the message of this book is hopeful. These systems, although already rendered irrelevant for the most part, can't exist forever in today's flattened world. In that regard, the ineffectiveness of today's current structures can be seen as a blessing - it is that ineffectiveness that will spawn a new era of innovation and change.

Written for everyone who is interested in and concerned about the nation's public universities, *The Future of the Public University in America* offers a view from the perspective of two experienced professionals. James J. Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, and Farris W. Womack, former executive vice president and chief financial officer of the University of Michigan, explore the unique challenges facing public higher education today. They look at the forces driving change—economic imperatives, technology, and market forces—as well as the characteristics of the public university that make change difficult: the nature of its various campus communities, its governance system, its management and decision-making processes, and its leadership. The authors conclude by suggesting strategies at the state and federal level to preserve and strengthen public higher education as a resource for future generations.